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They are skilful in picking out young men at small salaries and letting them grow old in the enjoyment of them, but not so great in creating for the best of them the environment most advantageous for their individual development and their productivity for science and human betterment. They utilize talent instead of fostering genius, for which they too often provide an early death that can hardly be termed euthanasia.

The institutional exploitation of genius has been tried long and on a large scale, and it is clearly not a success. Let us give the endowment of the individual as long and as extensive a trial and see what the results will be. Let us have the new university with the new ideals of the value of men of science to education and to human activities and ideals. Let us institute an academic freedom worthy the name!

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THE KUMBAINGGERI, TURRUBUL, KAIABARA AND  
MYCOOLON TRIBES, AUSTRALIA

In his "Native Tribes of Southeast Australia," Dr. A. W. Howitt refers to the Kumbainggeri tribe (my Kumbainggeri) on the Bellinger River, on the east coast of New South Wales, and after mentioning their four intermarrying divisions, says:

It is not possible to say how these four subclasses (my sections) are placed in pairs representing the two moieties of the tribe, without which knowledge it can not be said whether descent is in the male or the female line.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, he places the Kumbainggeri amongst others under a general heading of "Tribes with male descent."

In 1897<sup>2</sup> and again in 1900<sup>3</sup> I published a table of the four intermarrying sections of the Kumbainggeri tribe, showing how the sections are divided into two phratries or cycles, and supplying lists of totems belonging to each cycle. I stated that "the rules of

marriage and descent are precisely the same as in the Kamilaroi tribe." I also pointed out that whether a woman of the Womboöng section marries a Kurpoöng or Marroöng husband, her offspring is always Wirroöng. Mr. Edward Palmer had previously, in 1883, reported the four divisions of the Kumbainggeri, but he did not show their classification into phratries or cycles.<sup>4</sup>

The following is a copy of my table above referred to:

Phra- try or Cycle	Husband	Wife	Offspring
A {	Kurpoöng	Womboöng	Wirroöng
	Marroöng	Wirroöng	Womboöng
B {	Wirroöng	Marroöng	Kurpoöng
	Womboöng	Kurpoöng	Marroöng

There are feminine forms of these names, which appear in my table of 1897 and 1900, but they are omitted in the present table, for the sake of simplicity. It was stated in my former papers that Kurpoöng corresponds to Murri, Marroöng to Kubbi, Wirroöng to Ippai, and Womboöng to Kumbo, of the Kamilaroi divisions.

In 1898 I published a detailed account of the Burbung ceremony of initiation practised by the Kumbainggeri tribe with a comprehensive map of their territory.<sup>5</sup> In 1900 I also described a preliminary form of initiation used by the same tribe, known as the Murrawin ceremony.<sup>6</sup> In 1903 I published a grammar and vocabulary of the Kumbainggeri language.<sup>7</sup>

Having therefore been personally engaged in investigations among the Kumbainggeri tribe for a number of years, I am unwilling that Dr. Howitt's assertion that the line of descent can not be given, should go forth uncontradicted, especially as my works already quoted have made it indisputably clear that

<sup>4</sup> *Journ. Anthropol. Inst., London*, XIII., p. 304.

<sup>5</sup> *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc., Phila.*, XXXVII., pp. 54-73, map.

<sup>6</sup> *Queensland Geographical Journal*, XVI., pp. 35-40.

<sup>7</sup> *Mitteil. d. Anthropol. Gesellsch. in Wien*, XXXIII., pp. 321-328.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 105 and 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Journ. Roy. Soc. N. S. Wales*, XXXI., pp. 169-70.

<sup>3</sup> *Queensland Geographical Journal*, XVI., p. 41.

descent of the sections and totems is counted through the mothers in all cases.

Dr. Howitt reports that the Chepara and Turrubul tribes on the coast from Point Danger to Brisbane and Pine rivers "had no social organization in classes or totems, the regulation of marriage being by locality; and descent of name in the male line."<sup>8</sup> Speaking of the Kaiabara tribe at the Blackall or Bunya Bunya Ranges, he also asserts that "descent is in the male line."<sup>9</sup>

In 1898 I reported that the Turrubul tribe had the four intermarrying divisions, Barrang, Banjoor, Bunda and Derwain, with descent always reckoned on the female side, the children taking the phratry and totem name of their mother. At the same time I also showed that descent in the Kaiabara tribe is through the women and not through the men.<sup>10</sup>

In 1883 Dr. Howitt published a table of the four intermarrying divisions of the Mycoolon tribe on the Cloncurry River, Queensland, and stated that descent was through the father, giving as a reason that "under the influence of agnatic descent the girl is of the same class name as her mother's mother."<sup>11</sup>

In 1898 I contradicted this statement and showed that descent in the Mycoolon tribe is counted through the mother only.<sup>12</sup> Dr. Howitt in his late work, "Native Tribes of Southeast Australia," does not refer to my contradiction, from which it may be inferred that he maintains his statement of 1883. Whether he does so or not, it becomes necessary for me to repeat that I am quite certain that descent in the tribe mentioned is indisputably maternal. It should be mentioned that Mr. E. Palmer had also previously arrived at the same conclusion as myself.<sup>13</sup>

\* "Native Tribes of Southeast Australia," pp. 136-7.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 229.

<sup>9</sup> *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.*, XXXVII., pp. 328-31, with map; *Journ. Roy. Soc. N. S. Wales*, XXXII., pp. 81-3.

<sup>10</sup> *Journ. Anthropol. Inst., London*, XIII., p. 346.

<sup>11</sup> *Journ. Roy. Soc. N. S. Wales*, XXXII., pp. 82-3.

<sup>12</sup> *Journ. Anthropol. Inst., London*, XIII., p. 302.

I have thought it right to draw attention to the differences between Dr. Howitt's statements and mine in order that the anthropologists of America and Europe may have both our views before them to assist them in arriving at a conclusion regarding the line of descent in the cases under notice, because it is a matter of the highest importance.

R. H. MATHEWS

#### UNIFORMITY IN ENGLISH ABBREVIATIONS

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Is not the time ripe for uniformity in English abbreviations?

Perhaps the best way of bringing about such uniformity is through the issue, by some authoritative body, of a code in which, so far as possible, the roots of the words would be retained, a code somewhat similar to that used by the employees of the Associated Press. From such a code writers could probably be induced to take all their abbreviations which are to appear in print.

Such a code, if supported by strong authority, would probably be used by many writers for the press; and if learned through a course of years would not likely be a great strain on the memory, even though somewhat elaborate.

The present time seems to be propitious because workers in many special fields are introducing abbreviations of their own devising, many of them calling for the consultation of a table. From the point of view of the general diffusion of technical knowledge, it will prove unfortunate if the trials of the lay reader are increased by abbreviation of technical terms and the most direct road to preventing this is to decrease the labor of the scientist by abbreviating common terms.

The undersigned would be glad to hear from any parties who are interested in such a plan.

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#### INDISCRIMINATE KILLING OF MUSK OXEN

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: A number of facts are coming to light at the present time which must, in the minds of all thoughtful